

The Weekly *FOCUS* for the City of Falls Church, Virginia Editorial Guidelines

Subject Matter

The Weekly FOCUS is published by the City of Falls Church Office of Communications at the request of the Falls Church City Council. *The Weekly FOCUS* provides citizens of the City of Falls Church with information about City government and School programs, services, and activities.

Articles that are solely related to programs, services, and activities within the City of Falls Church are given first priority. Due to space issues, articles that run consecutively in *The Weekly FOCUS* more than twice will be excluded from subsequent editions to give more current articles an opportunity to run. While we will give fair consideration to publishing articles regarding programs, services, and activities held by Falls Church City citizens for profit, for not-for-profit organizations, and for those events that may be of interest to our readers but are not held in the City, such articles will only be published if space allows and if the information provided is in the interest of our readers.

Style

The Weekly FOCUS welcomes articles written in newspaper format, with the most important information written in the lead paragraph of the article. We look for lively, straightforward material unencumbered by technical jargon or academic argument. **We do not accept reprinted articles from other publications. We do not accept advertisements to promote businesses.**

Types of Submissions

The Weekly FOCUS accepts topics regarding the following subjects:

- Boards & Commissions
- City classes
- City Council information
- City events
- City Hall news
- City meetings
- Environmental, recycling, and tree-related issues
- Falls Church Community Television news and programming
- Library news
- Senior citizen news, calendar of events, classes, and trips
- Volunteerism by residents, businesses, youth, City staff
- Emergency preparedness

Submission Guidelines

1. Length
Articles run 100-400 words maximum
2. Calendar submissions are published in two-week installments for each week that the publication is published.
3. Advertisements
Advertisements for only City-related events will be published. Because ads need to be designed by the City's Graphic Artist, requests to create and publish ads must be submitted one month in advance of the publishing deadline.

Submissions of Public Notices

Recently there has been some confusion regarding the publishing of public and legal notices in *The Weekly FOCUS*. The *Falls Church News-Press* newspaper is considered a newspaper of record. The *News-Press* designates a specific section in its publication for posting public and legal notices, and the City as a municipality, is required to pay for and publish its public and legal notices in this designated area.

Sec. 4.10 of the City Charter requires that notices of public hearings on proposed ordinances must be "published in a newspaper of general circulation in the City...". Sec. 15.2-2203 of the Code of Virginia requires public hearings before City Council and the Planning Commission on zoning and other land use ordinances to be "published once a week for two successive weeks in some newspaper published or having general circulation in the locality...". *Black's Law Dictionary* defines "newspaper" as "a publication, usually in sheet form, intended for general circulation, and published regularly at short intervals, containing information and editorials on current events and news of general interest."

The Weekly FOCUS is not considered a "newspaper of general circulation" and does not serve as an alternative for fulfilling this requirement. It is only designed for publishing news and information related to City programs, initiatives and events.

Therefore, please only submit your public and legal notices to the *News-Press* directly to be published in the appropriate location.

Submissions for Schools Articles

Falls Church City Public Schools manage and edit their portion of *The Weekly FOCUS* two-page insert. To obtain a copy of the Schools' Editorial calendar, schedule, or to submit an article to Schools, please contact:

John Wesley Brett, Communications Specialist or
Falls Church City Public Schools
803 W. Broad Street, Suite 300
Falls Church, VA 22046
703-248-5680 (TTY 711)
jwbrett@fccps.org

All rules pertaining to the *FOCUS* also apply to the Schools' insert.

Preparation of Copy

Only electronic submissions (.doc for articles, .jpg for images) will be accepted. E-mail submissions to Nicole Gobbo, Communications Director, at ngobbo@fallschurchva.gov. Questions? Call 703-248-5210 (TTY 711).

Typewritten, single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font will only be accepted for publication. In the upper left-hand corner of the first page of your article, please type the following information:

1. Your Name
2. Your Organization
3. Your Address and/or Telephone Number
4. Word Count
5. Author's Name (for byline purposes)
6. Submission Title

Photo submissions must include captions and photo credit information.

Review, Acceptance, or Rejection

Articles submitted to *The Weekly FOCUS* are reviewed and edited by the Publisher. Due to rigid production deadlines, submitters will not have any opportunity to review their submitted material before the publication goes to print. All materials submitted are for final submission. All materials are subject to the approval of the Publisher, who reserves the right to reject material. Any material accepted is subject to revision as necessary and is the sole discretion of the Publisher to meet the requirements of *The Weekly FOCUS*.

Deadlines

Due to the rigid weekly publication schedule, all submissions must be submitted to the Office of Communications on or before the last Thursday of the month prior to the desired month of publication (i.e., article submissions for July must be submitted no later than the last Thursday in June). **No Exceptions.**

Ownership

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